

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following claim set replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A support comprised of a substrate formed of organic and/or inorganic fibres and a chitosan-based coating layer on at least one face of the substrate, wherein the coating layer is a dried residue of an aqueous chitosan-based solution which is comprised of prehydrolyzed chitosan having an average molar mass of less than 130,000 g/mol which is present in the solution in a concentration between 6 and 30 % by weight, and wherein the chitosan-based coating layer contains at least 80% by weight of the prehydrolyzed chitosan.
2. (previously presented) A support according to claim 1, wherein the prehydrolyzed chitosan is present in the coating layer in an amount of from 6 to 15 g/m² in dry matter.
3. (previously presented) A support according to claim 1, wherein the coating layer is in the form of a continuous film.
4. (previously presented) A support according to claim 1, wherein the prehydrolyzed chitosan has an average molar mass of between 15,000 and 40,000 g/mol.
5. (previously presented) A support according to claim 1, wherein the prehydrolyzed chitosan concentration in the aqueous solution is between 7 and 12 % by weight.
6. (previously presented) A support according to claim 1, wherein the aqueous solution is further comprised of citric acid in an amount sufficient to dissolve the prehydrolyzed chitosan.

7. (cancelled)

8. (previously presented) A support according to claim 1, wherein the amount of the prehydrolyzed chitosan in the coating layer is 7 g/m² in dry matter.

9. (previously presented) A support according to claim 1, further comprising a wax layer which covers the chitosan-based coating layer.

10. (currently amended) A process for making a ~~chitosan-coated chitosan-coated support member~~, the process comprising the sequential steps of:

- (a) prehydrolyzing chitosan so as to achieve an average molar mass thereof of less than 130,000 g/mol;
- (b) forming an aqueous chitosan-based solution comprised of between 6 and 30% by weight of the prehydrolyzed chitosan obtained according to step (a); and thereafter
- (c) forming the chitosan-coated support member by coating the aqueous chitosan-based solution onto a face of a substrate formed of organic and/or inorganic fibers to provide a chitosan-based coating layer on the substrate which contains at least 80% by weight of chitosan obtain the chitosan-coated support member.

11. (previously presented) A process according to claim 10, wherein step (c) is practiced so as to coat the aqueous chitosan-based solution onto the face of the substrate in only one step.

12. (previously presented) A process according to claim 10, wherein step (c) is performed by the Meyer bar or blade type coating, metering size-press, coating with an engraved cylinder by direct coating, by transfer coating or reverse coating, curtain coating, by size-press.

13. (previously presented) A process according to claim 10, wherein step (b) comprises introducing wax into the aqueous chitosan-based solution so that the wax is present in an amount of between 0.1 and 20 % by weight of the chitosan.

14. (previously presented) A process according to claim 10, further comprising (d) drying the chitosan-coated support member so that the prehydrolyzed chitosan remains as a dried layer on the substrate.

15. (previously presented) A process according to claim 10, wherein step (c) is practiced so that the prehydrolyzed chitosan is present in the coating layer in an amount of from 6 to 15 g/m² in dry matter.

16. (previously presented) A process according to claim 15, wherein the prehydrolyzed chitosan is present in the coating layer in an amount of 7 g/m² in dry matter.

17. (previously presented) A process according to claim 10, wherein step (c) is practiced so as to form the coating layer as a continuous film.

18. (previously presented) A process according to claim 10, wherein step (a) is practiced to obtain prehydrolyzed chitosan having an average molar mass of between 15,000 and 40,000 g/mol.

19. (previously presented) A process according to claim 10, wherein the prehydrolyzed chitosan concentration in the aqueous chitosan-based solution is between 7 and 12 % by weight.

20. (previously presented) A process according to claim 10, wherein step (b) includes incorporating citric acid into the aqueous chitosan-based solution in an amount sufficient to dissolve the chitosan therein.

21. (cancelled)